

**The Social Condition of England during 1800-1900 Reflected in “*Song to the Man of England*” and “*England in 1819*” by Percy B. Shelley.**

Submitted by: Annisa Qurrota A'yun

Thesis Advisor: Christina Resnitriwati

English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University. Jl. Prof.

Soedarto, SH, Tembalang, Semarang

**ABSTRACT**

In this thesis, the writer combines the analysis of the two poems written by Percy B. Shelley entitled “*Song to the Man of England*” and “*England in 1819*”. The writer analyzes these two poems with the same poet, Percy B. Shelley, because both of the poems are showing the condition of England people in that era. The purposes for the writer to write this thesis are to analyze the intrinsic elements, which is imageries, metaphor, and diction that is reflected in these two poems. The other purpose is to analyze the extrinsic element of the two poems and the condition of people in England during the Romantic Period (1811-1820), which is represented from the two poems in which the writer uses sociological approach and Marxist theory. The research method that the writer uses is contextual research method in which the writer analyzes the intrinsic element and the extrinsic elements of the poems. The results after analyzing these two poems is the writer can analyze the condition of people in England during the year 1800-1900 that is represented in these two poems.

Keywords: Imageries, Metaphor, Bees of England, Stingless Drones, Two-Edged Sword.

**ABSTRAKSI**

Di dalam skripsi ini, penulis menggabungkan analisa dari dua puisi yang ditulis oleh Percy B. Shelley berjudul “*Song to the Man of England*” dan “*England in 1819*”. Penulis menganalisa dua puisi dengan penyair yang sama, Percy B. Shelley, ini karena kedua puisi tersebut menunjukkan kondisi masyarakat Inggris pada masa itu. Adapun tujuan penulis menyusun skripsi ini adalah untuk menganalisa unsur intrinsik dari kedua puisi ini, antara lain citraan, metafora, dan diksi yang tercermin di dalam kedua puisi tersebut. Adapun tujuan

lainnya adalah untuk menganalisa unsur ekstrinsik dari kedua puisi tersebut dan kondisi masyarakat Inggris selama periode Romantis (1811-1820), yang direpresentasikan dari kedua puisi ini dimana penulis menggunakan pendekatan sosiologis dan teori marxisme. Metode penelitian yang penulis gunakan adalah metode penelitian kontekstual dimana penulis menganalisa unsur intrinsik dan unsur ekstrinsik dari puisi-puisi tersebut. Hasil setelah menganalisa kedua puisi ini adalah penulis dapat menganalisa kondisi masyarakat Inggris selama tahun 1800-1900 yang direpresentasikan dari kedua puisi tersebut.

Kata Kunci: Citraan, Metafora, Lebah-lebah Inggris, Lebah-lebah Jantan yang Tak Berbisa, Pedang Bermata Dua

## I. INTRODUCTION

Literature is a part of human life. As people know, since human functions as a social individual, human uses literature as a media to socialize with other people. Based on Wellek and Warren in *Theory of Literature*, literature is

a social institution, using as its medium language, a social creation... They are conventions and norms which could 'have arisen only in society'. Literature 'represents' 'life', and 'life' is in large measure, a social reality, even though the natural world and the inner or subjective world of the individual have also been objects of literary 'imitation' (Wellek and Warren, *Theory of Literature*, 1948:94).

There are many kinds of fiction. For instance, there is poetry, novel, prose, and drama (play). However, in this thesis, the writer would like to discuss about one kind of fiction, poetry. People know poetry from its lyrical words made by a great and famous poet but not understand what poetry is like. Michael Clay Thompson states in his journal *Some Elements of Poetry*,

those who are not well acquainted with good poetry might imagine that poetry is a spontaneous emotional production, involving perhaps some rhyme, but relying largely on intuition and fortuitous accident, *the muse*, for the details of genius which make great poems great (<http://www.rfwp.com/samples/elements-of-poetry.pdf>, 2006:1).

Moreover, John Stuart Mill says in his journal entitled *What Is Poetry?*,

the word "poetry" imports something quite peculiar in its nature; something which may exist in what is called prose as well as in verse; something which does not even require the instrument of words, but can speak through the other audible symbols called musical sounds, and even through the visible ones which are the language of sculpture, painting, and

architecture

([http://www.laits.utexas.edu/farrell/documents/Mill\\_What%20Is%20Poetry.pdf](http://www.laits.utexas.edu/farrell/documents/Mill_What%20Is%20Poetry.pdf) 1859:1).

Poetry is a kind of literature that uses special language to make it meaningful. Poets, the authors of the poem, use special language that also has special meaning to express the message of the poem to the reader. As Perrine says in his book *Sounds and Sense: An Introduction to Poetry* (1969: 3),

poetry might be defined as a kind of language that says *more* and says it *more intensely* than does ordinary language. In order to understand this fully, we need to understand what it is that poetry “says.”

Based on Lethbridge and Mildorf journal entitled *Basics of English Studies: An introductory course for students of literary studies in English*, they says,

poems usually try to express their meaning in much less space than, say, a novel or even a short story. Alexander Pope once explained that he preferred to write poetry even when he wrote about philosophy because it enabled him to express himself more briefly (Pope, *Preface to An Essay on Man*, 1734). As a result of its relative brevity, poetry tends to make more concentrated use of formal elements, it displays a tendency for structural, phonological, morphological and syntactic **overstructuring**, a concept which originated in formalist and structuralist criticism (<http://www2.anglistik.uni-freiburg.de/intranet/englishbasics/PDF/Poetry.pdf> 2003:142).

There are some elements that make a poem to be more poetic and more meaningful. Those elements are music, emotion, imagery, journey, form, clarity, complexity, and astonishment (Willow Hambrick, *The Poem as Craft: Poetic Elements* [https://english.as.uky.edu/sites/default/files/ThePoemAsCraft\\_byWillowHambrick.pdf](https://english.as.uky.edu/sites/default/files/ThePoemAsCraft_byWillowHambrick.pdf). Page 1).

Moreover, Wellek and Warren has said in their book that “The poet, himself, is a member of society, possessed of a specific social status: he receives some degrees of social recognition and reward; he addresses an audience, however hypothetical.”(Wellek and Warren, 1948:94). That is why we often find poem that criticize the social life of a class or people in certain country or certain era that has connection with the poet’s life.

In this thesis, the poems that the writer would like to analyze are entitled “*Song to the Man of England*” and “*England in 1819*” by Percy Bysshe Shelley.

Here, the writer wants to combine the analysis of the two poems since both of the poems have correlation and have the same topic. Both of the poems by Percy B. Shelley criticize the life of the people in England during 1800-1900, in which the lower class people were forced to work hard for the tyrant leader. The writer wants to analyze the condition in that era by relating it to the poem and analyze it through several aspects of intrinsic element, which are imagery, figurative language, and diction. Moreover, to exemplify the writer's analysis, the writer also analyzes the extrinsic element using sociological approach by correlating the content of the poem with the condition of people in England during 1800-1900.

Therefore, the writer would like to give title of this thesis *The Social Condition of England during 1800-1900 Reflected in “Song to the Man of England” and “England in 1819” by Percy B. Shelley.*

## **I.2 Purpose of the Studies**

1. To analyze the imagery that is represented in “*Song to the Man of England*” and “*England in 1819*” by Percy B. Shelley.
2. To analyze the figurative language, the metaphor, that is represented in the poem.
3. To analyze the diction that used by the poet in the poems.
4. To explain to the reader the social condition in England during 1800-1900 represented in the poems.

## **II. DISCUSSION**

### **II.1 Method of the Studies**

In this thesis, the method that the writer will use for her analysis is contextual method. Contextual method is a research method which analyzing the intrinsic and extrinsic element of the object that the writer analyzes and then relating both of them. As mentioned above, the object that the writer analyzes in this thesis is “*Song to the Man of England*” and “*England in 1819*” by Percy B. Shelley. Therefore, using this method, the writer collects data by analyzing the structure or the intrinsic element of the poem, which is around the imagery, the figurative language, and the diction of the poems. Then, the writer analyzes the

extrinsic element of the poem. In this thesis, the writer uses the sociological approach. The sources or data that the writer will use to exemplify the writer's analysis are several theories from books, internet articles. The writer will collect those data by searching books from library and browsing some references from the internet. In this case, the writer will use the appropriate data that is related to the writer's topic.

## **II.2 RESULT AND DESCRIPTION**

### **II.2.1 Intrinsic Element of “Song to the Man of England” and “England in 1819”**

#### **II.2.1.1 Imagery**

##### **II.2.1.1.1 Visual Imagery**

- **Visual Imagery in “Song to the Man of England”**

The visual imagery that the writer finds in the first stanza of the poem “*Song to the Man of England*” can be seen through line one. In line one, it can be seen there is the word “plough” in the sentence:

Men of England, wherefore plough

From the sentence in line one, it can be seen there is the words “Men of England”. It can be understood that the reader of the poem has imagined the “Men of England”. In their mind, the reader sees that, commonly, the typical of English people or English men have white skin color, pointed nose, and blonde hair.

- **Visual Imagery in “England in 1819”**

The visual imagery that the writer finds in the poem entitled “*England in 1819*” can be seen in line one and two.

An old man, blind, despised, and dying king  
Princes, the dregs of their dull race, who flow

It can be seen from these two lines the speaker of the poem is looking at his king and princes condition. It can be understood by the reader of the poem that the king is old, blind, despised and dying. While for the princes, the speaker sees his prince seems like a dull people, as it is mentioned in the line by the phrase “their dull race”.

##### **II.2.1.1.2 Kinesthetic Imagery**

- **Kinesthetic Imagery in “Song to the Man of England”**

The kinesthetic imagery that the writer finds in the first stanza of this poem can be seen through line one and line three. In line one it can be seen there is the word “plough” in the sentence:

Men of England, wherefore plough  
(line one)  
Wherefore weave with toil and care  
(line three)

From the sentence in line one, it can be said that the speaker of the poem saw the people in England was ploughing their field. Based on the dictionary meaning, the word “plough” means a large farming implement with one or more blades fixed in a frame, drawn by a tractor or by animals and used for cutting furrows in the soil and turning it over, especially to prepare for the planting of seeds. As we know, the people who usually do this are farmer. Therefore, it can be said that the English people who works as a farmer is ploughing their field for planting.

- **Kinesthetic Imagery in “England in 1819”**

The kinesthetic imagery that is found in this poem can be seen in line one and line two.

An old, mad, blind, despised, and dying king  
Princes, the dregs of their dull race, who flow  
Through public scorn, mud from a muddy spring

From the line, it can be seen that there is the word “flow”. The word “flow” means the action of moving along in a steady or continuous stream. It means that the king and princes are moving along their people steadily.

#### **II.2.1.1.3 Tactile Imagery**

- **Tactile Imagery in “Song to the Man of England”**

The first tactile imagery that is found in this poem can be seen in stanza one line two and three.

For the lords who lay ye low  
Wherefore weave with toil and care

From the lines, the word that can be included as tactile is shown by the word “lay ye low” and “toil and care”. The word “lay ye low” means to underestimate someone. The word “toil” means exhausting physical labor. While the word “care” means serious attention applied to do something correctly or to avoid damage or risk. It means that the England ruler underestimates his people. Though their ruler underestimates them, English people are still very care to their king.

- **Tactile Imagery in “England in 1819”**

The first line that shows tactile imagery can be seen in line one and line two.

An old, mad, blind, despised, and dying king  
Princes, the dregs of their dull race, who flow

From the line, it can be seen that the sense of feeling in the line shows the character of the England ruler, the king and his princes. The king is too old to lead the kingdom, while the princes are less intense people. All of them cannot lead their country well.

#### **II.2.1.2 Figurative Language**

##### **II.2.1.2.1 Metaphor**

- **Metaphor in “Song to the Man of England”**

The stanza that is found the expression of metaphor is stanza two. The words in this stanza that express metaphor are shown through the words “the cradle”, “the grave”, and “ungrateful drones”. All of the words can be seen in line two and three.

From the cradle to the grave,  
Those ungrateful drones who would

Based on dictionary, the word “cradle” can be seen in stanza two line two means an infant's bed or crib. While the word “grave” means a place of burial for a dead body. Moreover, the word “drones” means a male bee in a colony of social bees, which does not work but can fertilize a queen. Those words refer to the king of England and all his sons or princes. From the line, it can be understand that the English people have served their leader in all their life since they are child until they are old. However, the king and his princes do not show any respect or

thankful feeling to their people, they keep treating them cruelly. Therefore, the king and the princes are called in the poem as “drone” because they do not want to do any work. They just stay in their palace and wait for their people to give them money for their wealth.

- **Metaphor in “England in 1819”**

The metaphor that is found in the poem can be seen in line one until line three.

An old, mad, blind, despised, and dying king  
Princes, the dregs of their dull race, who flow

It is expressed in the poem that the England rulers, the king and his princes, is called by the speaker of the poem as “the dregs of their dull race”. This expression means that the king and the princes are a group full of dull people that are ruling the kingdom.

### **II.2.1.3 Diction**

- **Diction in “Song to the Man of England”**

The diction that the writer finds in “*Song to the Man of England*” can be seen in stanza two line one and two.

Wherefore feed and clothe and save,  
From the cradle to the grave,

From the second line, it can be seen that there are the word “cradle” and the word “grave”. For the denotation meaning, the word “cradle” means an infant’s bed. However, for the connotation meaning, the word “cradle” wants to express “a young age of a person”. Meanwhile, the denotation meaning of the word “grave” is a place to bury a dead body. For the connotation meaning, the word “grave” wants to express “an old age of a person”. Therefore, by the context of the first line and the second line, the sentence “From the cradle to the grave” gives the reader of the poem an information that the English people have dedicated all their life, since they were young until they were old, for their king and princes.

- **Diction in “England in 1819”**

The diction that the writer finds in the poem “*England in 1819*” can be seen in line four and five.



Rulers who neither see, nor feel, nor know,  
But leech-like to their fainting country cling,

It can be seen from the second line, there is the word “leech”. For the denotation meaning, the word “leech” means a worm that sucks blood. For the connotation meaning, the word “leech-like” means being a parasite on something or relying on somebody. This word refers to the ruler of England, the king and the princes. From the context, it can be understood that the king and the princes keep relying on their people hard works. They do not care if their people are suffering because of them.

### **II.2.2 Extrinsic Element of the “Song to the Man of England” and “England in 1819”**

In that era, the king who ruled England, King George III and his family ruled their people badly. He was recognized by his people as a tyrant king. He never cares about the condition of his people. He only cares about making his life and his family wealthier from his people works. The part in the poem “*Song to the Man of England*” by Percy B. Shelley that King George III is a tyrant ruler is shown in stanza 1 line 1 until 4, stanza 2 line 3 and 4, stanza 3 line 3 and 4, while in the poem “*England in 1819*” by Percy B. Shelley, the prove is shown in line 4 and 5.

Men of England, wherefore plough  
For the lords who lay ye low?  
Wherefore weave with toil and care  
The rich robes your tyrant wear?

In stanza 1 of the poem “*Song to the Man of England*”, it can be seen that the English people is ordered by the king to do many works, such as farming to make foods for the king, sewing to make the king’s robes, and making many weapons for the king’s soldier. The people have to make all things without a satisfying payment. They, even, have to pay a huge amount of tax by their own payment to make the king much wealthier. It can be said that the people in England cannot enjoy their hard work every day because they have to give their income to the king.

Those ungrateful drones who would  
Drain your sweat – nay, drink your blood?

### III. Conclusion

From both of Percy B. Shelley's poems entitled *Song to the Man of England* and *England in 1819*, it can be understood that there are main points or the poet's messages that can be taken from the poems. The writer combines the use of the theory with the history of England in 1800-1900, which in that era the writer finds that it is King George III's era. From the analysis of the intrinsic and extrinsic element of the poems, the writer finds the correlation between both of the poems. For example, the expressions used by the poet in metaphor are very connected to the history of England that the writer shows in the extrinsic analysis.

#### Bibliography

Perrine, Lawrence. 1969. *Sounds and Sense: An Introduction to Poetry*. New York: Hartcourt, Brace & World, Inc.

Wellek, Rene and Austin Warren. 1948. *Theory of Literature*. New Haven: Penguin Books.

Hambrick, Willow. – *The Poem as Craft: Poetic Elements*. <[https://english.as.uky.edu/sites/default/files/ThePoemAsCraft\\_byWillowHambrick.pdf](https://english.as.uky.edu/sites/default/files/ThePoemAsCraft_byWillowHambrick.pdf)> -August-31-2015-2:13-A.M.

Lethbridge, Stephanie and JarmilaMildorf. 2003. *Basics of English Studies: An introductory course for students of literary studies in English*. <<http://www2.anglistik.uni-freiburg.de/intranet/englishbasics/PDF/Poetry.pdf>> -August-31-2015-2:13-A.M.

Mill, John Stuart. 1859. *What Is Poetry?* <[http://www.laits.utexas.edu/farrell/documents/Mill\\_What%20Is%20Poetry.pdf](http://www.laits.utexas.edu/farrell/documents/Mill_What%20Is%20Poetry.pdf)> -August-31-2015-2:13-A.M.

Thompson, Michael Clay. 2006. *Some Elements of Poetry*. <<http://www.rfwp.com/samples/elements-of-poetry.pdf>> -August-31-2015-2:13-A.M.